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ARTICLE III.

A CYLINDER OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR.

BY DR. ALFRED B. MOLDENKE,
OF NEW YORK CITY.

Presented to the Society April, 1893.

THE cylinder published in the following pages was purchased in 1878 by Gen. C. P. di Cesnola for the Metropolitan Museum of Art of New York City from the British Museum. Although it has been in New York for so long a period, and several attempts at decipherment were made, it has never, as far as I am aware, been published. It is still in a splendid state of preservation, and forms one of the principal attractions of the Museum's collection of Babylonian antiquities. The individual signs are blurred in some parts (especially II. 6); but the outlines can still be traced. The cylinder is 5 inches high, and $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches in diameter at the thickest part.

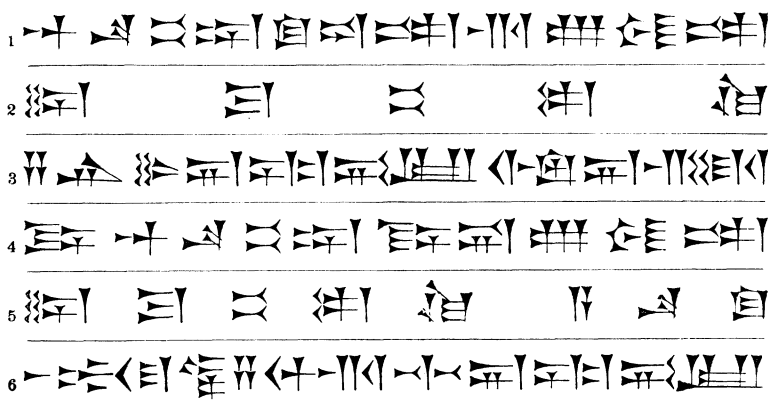
The text is divided into two columns. These columns are, however, separated only by a slight ridge-like elevation of clay, and not, as we generally find it, by straight lines. The latter, on the other hand, are employed to divide the individual text lines. A small space marks the beginning of the text. The lines of columns I. and II. meet each other in the middle of the cylinder, and really form one long line. The only exceptions are: I. 16=II. 16, 17; I. 22 = II. 23, 24; and I. 25 = II. 27, 28. Hence column II. contains three lines more than column I.

The text treats of a wall that Nebuchadnezzar had built in order to strengthen the defenses of Babylon and its cherished temple Esagila. This wall he built even further away from Babylon than its already strong and famous wall Imgur-Bel. Both are to protect the eastern part of the city against an enemy. Each forms a defense by itself; the walls are not connected in any way. The new wall is strengthened also by the digging of a ditch on the outer side. It is built "like a mountain," out of pitch and glazed bricks, and it forms an addition to the wall that Nabopolassar had built, called Gatnushi. Nebuchadnezzar's work, however, is superior to that of his father. For the wall built by the latter had to be made higher in order to be in harmony with

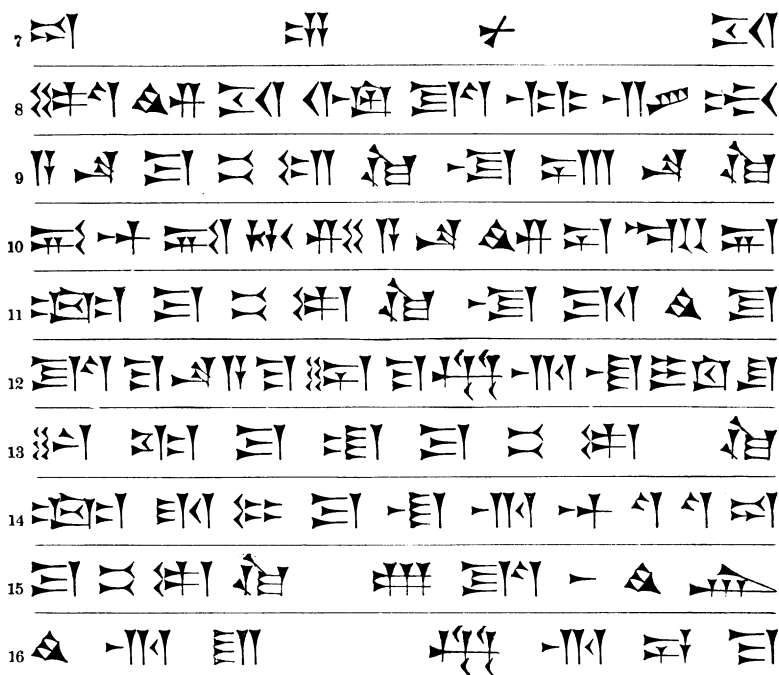
the one built by his son. The work is done thoroughly, the foundation being placed even below the level of the water. The document, perhaps also this cylinder, finds its place on the level of the sea, so low as to be out of the reach of inimical hands, but still high enough to be safe from the destructive power of water. The side of the wall, the one toward the enemy, is particularly strengthened against the ravages of the battering ram. The wall is then adorned with a large gate, undoubtedly of the most beautiful architecture, which shall remain an eternal monument of the fame of Nebuchadnezzar. But Babylon was a land of religion, and the king knows that he can only succeed with the help of the gods. Hence the inscription ends with a prayer to Marduk, the tutelary deity of Esagila, which sanctuary Nebuchadnezzar is thus eager to defend from defiling hands.

Through the kindness of Prof. Hall of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, who placed the cylinder at my disposal, I am enabled to publish it here in full.

First Column.



TRANSLITERATION.	TRANSLATION.
I. 1. <i>ilu Na-bi-um·ku-du-ur-ri-u- šu-ur</i>	Nebuchadnezzar,
2. <i>šar Ba-bi-lam iršitu</i>	King of Babylon,
3. <i>za-ni-in Í-sag-ila u Í-zi-da</i>	adorners of Esagila and Ezida,
4. <i>már ilu Na-bi-um-apal-u- šu-ur</i>	son of Nabopolassar,
5. <i>šar Ba-bi-lam iršitu a-na- ku</i>	King of Babylon, am I.
6. <i>aš-šum ma-aš-ša-ar-ti Í- sag-ila</i>	In order to (7) strengthen (6) the defense of Esagila,



TRANSLITERATION.

7. *du-un-nu-nim*
 8. *li-im-nim u ša-aḫ-gi-šum*
 9. *a-na Ba-bi-lam* ^{*iršitu*} *lā*
 sa-na-ki
 10. *ga-an ta-ḫa-zi a-na Im-*
 gur-Bil
 11. *dūr Ba-bi-lam* ^{*iršitu*} *lā*
 da-ḫi-šu
 12. *ša ma-na-a-ma šar ma-*
 aḫ-ri lā i-pu-šu
 13. *in ka-ma-at Ba-bi-*
 lam ^{*iršitu*}
 14. *dūru dānu ba-la-ri šit*
 Šamši
 15. *Ba-bi-lam* ^{*iršitu*} *u-ša-aš-*
 ḫi-ir
 16. *ḫi-ri-su aḫ-ri-i-ma*

TRANSLATION.

- (that) an enemy and a destroyer
 against Babylon might not press
 the storm of battle, in addition
 to Imgur-Bel,
 a wall of Babylon not touching
 it,
 which no king before had done,
 on the outer line of Babylon
 a strong wall, in the region of
 the east,
 I let surround Babylon.
 Its canal I dug;

17	𒂗 𒍪 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭
18	𒂗 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭
19	𒂗 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭
20	𒂗 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭
21	𒂗 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭
22	𒂗 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭
23	𒂗 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭
24	𒂗 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭
25	𒂗 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭
26	𒂗 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭
27	𒂗 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭 𒀭

TRANSLITERATION.

17. *šu-pu-ul mi-í ak-šu-ud*18. *ap-pa-li-is-ma*19. *ka-ar a-bi-im ik-zu-ur-ru*20. *Ga-at-nu-ši iršitu in-šu*21. *dāru dannu ša ki-ma
sa-tu-um*22. *lā ut-ta-aš-šu*23. *in kupri u agurri*24. *ab-ni-ma*25. *it-ti ka-ar a-bi ik-zu-ur-ru*26. *í-si-ni-ik-ma*27. *í-ši-su in i-ra-at ki-gal-ši*

TRANSLATION.

the level of the water I reached
and I saw.The wall (that) my father had
erected(namely) Gatnushi, I raised:
a strong wall, like a mountain(which) cannot be moved,
of pitch and glazed bricks

I built,

and with the wall (that my)
father had erected

I joined.

Its foundation on the breast of
the lower world

Second Column.

1 ䷆ ䷋ ䷌ ䷍ ䷎ ䷏ ䷐
2 ䷑ ䷒ ䷓ ䷔ ䷕ ䷖ ䷗ ䷘
3 ䷙ ䷚ ䷛ ䷜ ䷝ ䷞ ䷟
4 ䷠ ䷡ ䷢ ䷣ ䷤ ䷥ ䷦ ䷧ ䷨
5 ䷩ ䷪ ䷫ ䷬ ䷭ ䷮ ䷯
6 ䷰ ䷱ ䷲ ䷳ ䷴ ䷵ ䷶ ䷷ ䷸
7 ䷹ ䷺ ䷻ ䷼ ䷽ ䷾ ䷿ ䷀ ䷁
8 ䷂ ䷃ ䷄ ䷅ ䷆ ䷇ ䷈ ䷉
9 ䷊ ䷋ ䷌ ䷍ ䷎ ䷏ ䷐ ䷑ ䷒
10 ䷓ ䷔ ䷕ ䷖ ䷗ ䷘ ䷙ ䷚ ䷛
11 ䷜ ䷝ ䷞ ䷟ ䷠ ䷡ ䷢ ䷣ ䷤ ䷥

TRANSLITERATION.

TRANSLATION.

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| II. 1. <i>u-ša-ar-ši-id-ma</i> | I placed; |
| 2. <i>ri-i-ši-šu sa-da-ni-iš</i> | its top mountain-high |
| 3. <i>u-za-ak-ki-ir</i> | I raised. |
| 4. <i>i-ta-at dūri a-na du-un-nu-</i>
<i>nim</i> | The side of the wall for strength |
| 5. <i>u-ša-al-bi(!)-iš-ma</i> | I fitted (clothed). |
| 6. <i>in du a-šur-ra-a-ra ti-a-am</i> | On the outside a beautiful (?) |
| | sea, |
| 7. <i>iš-di dūri a-gur-ri i-mi-</i>
<i>id-ma</i> | at the foundation of the wall, |
| 8. <i>in i-ra-at ap-si-i</i> | with glazed bricks I built; |
| 9. <i>u-ša-ar-ši-id ti-mi-in-šu</i> | on the level of the sea |
| | I established its document. |
| 10. <i>ma-aš-ša-ar-ti Í-sag-ila</i> | The defense of Esagila |
| 11. <i>u Ba-bi-lam^{iršitu} u-da-an-</i>
<i>ni-mi-ma</i> | and of Babylon I strengthened. |



TRANSLITERATION.

23. *a-na ši-ri-ik-tum šu-ur-*
*kam*24. *lu-ri-ši-tu kul-[lat napšat]-*
*ia*25. ^{ih} *Marduk at-ta-a-ma*26. *in ki-bi-ti-ka ki-it-ti*27. *ša lá na-ka-ri*28. *lu-ti-bu-u lu-za-aḫ-tu*29. *ka-ak-ku-u-a*30. *ka-ak na-ki-ri li-mi-i-su*

TRANSLATION.

for a present may he present and

may he help (me) all my life.

O Marduk, thou,
According to thy just commands,
which do not change,
may go out, may wound
my weapons; (and)
the weapons of (my) enemies
may they lay low.

NOTES.

I. 16. "Its" canal: that is, the canal that was considered a necessary adjunct to each wall.

II. 5. The fourth sign in this line, usually read *li*, is to be read *bī* here, and the word is to be taken from *labāšu*.

II. 6. *a-šur-ra-a-ra* I would, for lack of a better explanation, connect with *šarūru* 'beauty, splendor.' *kima šit arhi unammir ša-ru-ru-šu* (VR. 64, col. II. line 23) 'Like the rising of the moon I made its "beauty" shine.'

The sense of lines 6 and 7 of column II. is that Nebuchadnezzar lined the sides of the lake he constructed with glazed bricks, thus giv-

ing him the right to call the lake "beautiful," and also to use the word "build."

This Babylonian dialect, found on nearly all the building inscriptions of Nabopolassar, Nebuchadnezzar, and Nabonidus, has many marked peculiarities. A few of those that occur in this text are :

The use of *s* for *š* : in the suffix of the 3rd pers. sing., I. 16, *hi-ri-su* for *hi-ri-šu* ; I. 27, *i-ši-su* for *i-ši-šu*. This, however, is often met with also in Assyrian texts. Then in I. 21 we have *sa-tu-um* for *ša-du-um* ; II. 2, *sa-da-ni-iš* for *ša-da-ni-iš*.

Also the use of *k* for *k* : I. 9, *sa-na-ki* for *sa-na-ki* from *sanāku* 'press with hostile intent.' Also *in* is used for *ina* : I. 13, 23, 27, II. 6, 20, 26. In I. 8 we have *ša-ak-gi-šum* for *ša-ak-ki-šum* ; and in II. 3 *u-za-ak-ki-ir* for *u-za-ak-ki-ir*.

I would conclude from this, either that the use of incorrect signs was due to the carelessness of the Babylonian scribe, or that these signs had already obtained the required value in Babylonia.